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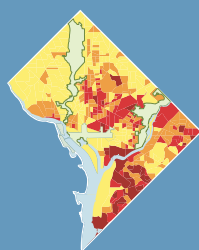
MILLENNIUM  
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OPEN



# THE FIRST CHALLENGE: Creating Successful Neighborhoods

Washington is much more than a city of monuments and memorials. It is also our home—made up of over 130 neighborhoods. These neighborhoods have a mosaic of people and cultures and a diversity of housing and superb architecture.

Income Divide



While many neighborhoods have great strengths, assets, and distinct character, others need work to realize their full potential.

The challenges are clear. Our city is divided by income. Our neighborhoods have many different styles of homes, but not all residents have housing options. We have nature all around us, but there are not enough safe parks and open spaces within

close reach. Our local histories and traditions are strong, but not all neighborhoods have the resources to protect and revive their historic landmarks.

To grow an inclusive city, we need to start where we live. We need to make our neighborhoods more accessible to everyone by:

**STRENGTHENING NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY**—Making sure each neighborhood has a unique focal point—a place that serves as the heart of the community.

**CREATING HOUSING CHOICES**—Providing a range of housing options and prices in all neighborhoods across the city.

**GUIDING GROWTH**—Strengthening neighborhoods as we grow by eliminating blight, making better use of land near transit stations and along boulevards, and converting surplus government-owned land into new communities.

**IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**—Improving the environment in each neighborhood, from having a park in every neighborhood to cleaning our air, streams, and rivers.

**TARGETING INVESTMENT**—Focusing public and private investments in specific areas, creating models for success that neighborhoods across the city can follow.

Growing a more inclusive city starts in our neighborhoods—the building blocks that make up DC.

# Strengthening Neighborhood Identity

## IN OUR CITY TODAY...

### Some neighborhoods lack strong centers

**What feature comes to mind when you think about your neighborhood center? Is it a row of shops? A park or tree-lined street? An historic theater?**

Traditionally, it was the town square or marketplace that was the center of community life. Today, a variety of places and spaces serve this role. They may be main streets, they may be parks, or they may even be local grocery stores. What these places share is the sense of place and pride they evoke for the residents they serve. Unfortunately, not all neighborhoods in our city have such places. Problems like blight, drugs, and crime have been obstacles to their development.

The potential to create a unique center exists in every DC neighborhood. Through a series of strategic and coordinated projects, every neighborhood can have a strong heart that reinforces its identity and provides a destination for its residents.

Neighborhood identity can also be reinforced through good design. By regulating the height and bulk of buildings, and providing guidelines for rehabilitation and new development, we can protect and strengthen the qualities that give our neighborhoods their unique character.



Focused public and private investments along a corridor such as this can strengthen neighborhood identity.

## IN OUR CITY TOMORROW...

**We will build on each neighborhood's unique characteristics to create lively centers of different types and sizes. These centers could be:**



**GETTING THERE  
will require  
policies that:**

## All neighborhoods will have a strong identity

**SHOPPING DISTRICTS** where residents can easily walk to stores and restaurants. You can see this today along some of DC's newly developed Main Streets, from 14th Street NW to Barracks Row in Southeast.

**PUBLIC BUILDINGS** that offer many services. Schools, libraries, and similar places will be multi-use centers where residents go for education, childcare, job training, health care services, and more.

**OUTDOOR GATHERING PLACES** such as public plazas, parks, or other open spaces. Depending on the neighborhood these places might include features such as gardens, trees, recreation, or public art.



**IDENTIFY** specific centers in each neighborhood. Ideally these will be safe, appealing places with direct public transit access to the rest of the city.

**PRIORITIZE** public and private investments (such as street lighting, landscaping, and public building improvements) so that neighborhood centers receive funding.

**INTEGRATE** uses in public facilities such as schools, recreation centers, and libraries. This will mean consolidating services and possibly even closing redundant public facilities.

**GUIDE** additional services—such as childcare and job training—to our schools, transforming school campuses into “wrap-around” centers that serve the whole community.

**PROTECT** neighborhood aesthetics and promote high quality architecture and urban design.

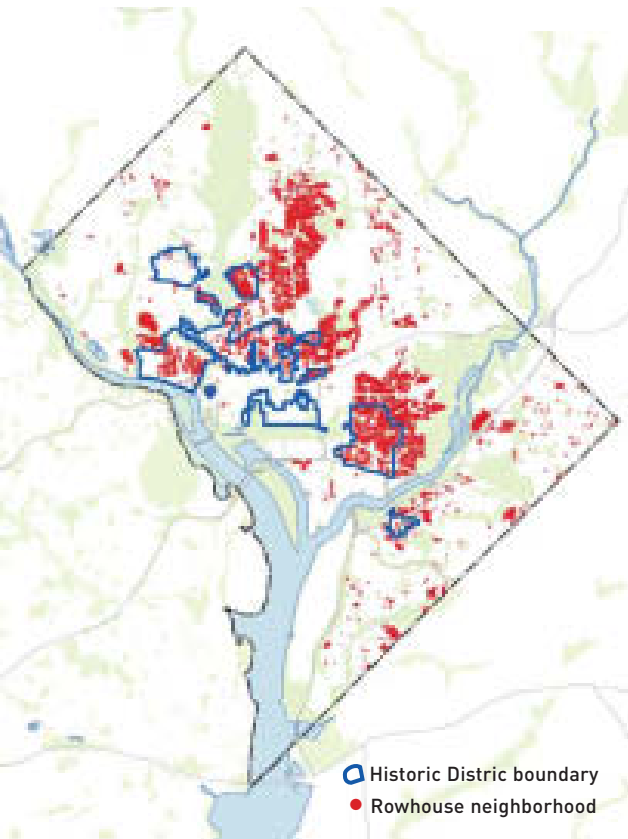
**INVOLVE** residents in design and development decisions to make sure each center reflects its neighborhood's heritage and interests.



# Strengthening Neighborhood Identity

## IN OUR CITY TODAY... Some of our older neighborhoods are in jeopardy

Historic buildings are an important part of our city's unique heritage. DC has over 23,500 official historic structures and 26 neighborhood historic districts.



Many rowhouse neighborhoods are outside historic districts and are not protected.

Older single family homes, rowhouses, and apartments make up much of our city's housing stock. Rowhouses in particular contribute to neighborhood character and are one of the strengths that make DC stand out from other US cities. Rowhouse neighborhoods, mostly built between 1870 and the 1930s, make up more than one-fourth of Washington's housing. Many of these neighborhoods continue to provide homes to people of different incomes. One reason is because rowhouses are flexible; they can provide an owner-occupied home above and a rental apartment below or flats on different levels.

Moving into the 21st century, we face several challenges:

- Renovations, additions and new buildings often look out of place in older areas that are not official historic districts. Building modifications may not fit in with the neighborhood's historic character, and may even damage or destroy older buildings with historic merit.
- Market demand in historic neighborhoods is uneven. In high-demand neighborhoods such as Logan Circle and Shaw rising prices have made housing less affordable for some long-time residents. In other neighborhoods, such as Anacostia, housing continues to be affordable but there are few economic incentives to restore historic homes.
- Many historic commercial corridors are struggling. Stores along these streets are not attractive to new businesses because the buildings or available sites are too small, the second-story spaces are not marketable, or there is a lack of parking.

If we take the right steps we can better protect our historic neighborhoods from demolition, wear and tear, and careless changes. In the process, we can maintain a range of housing options for everyone.

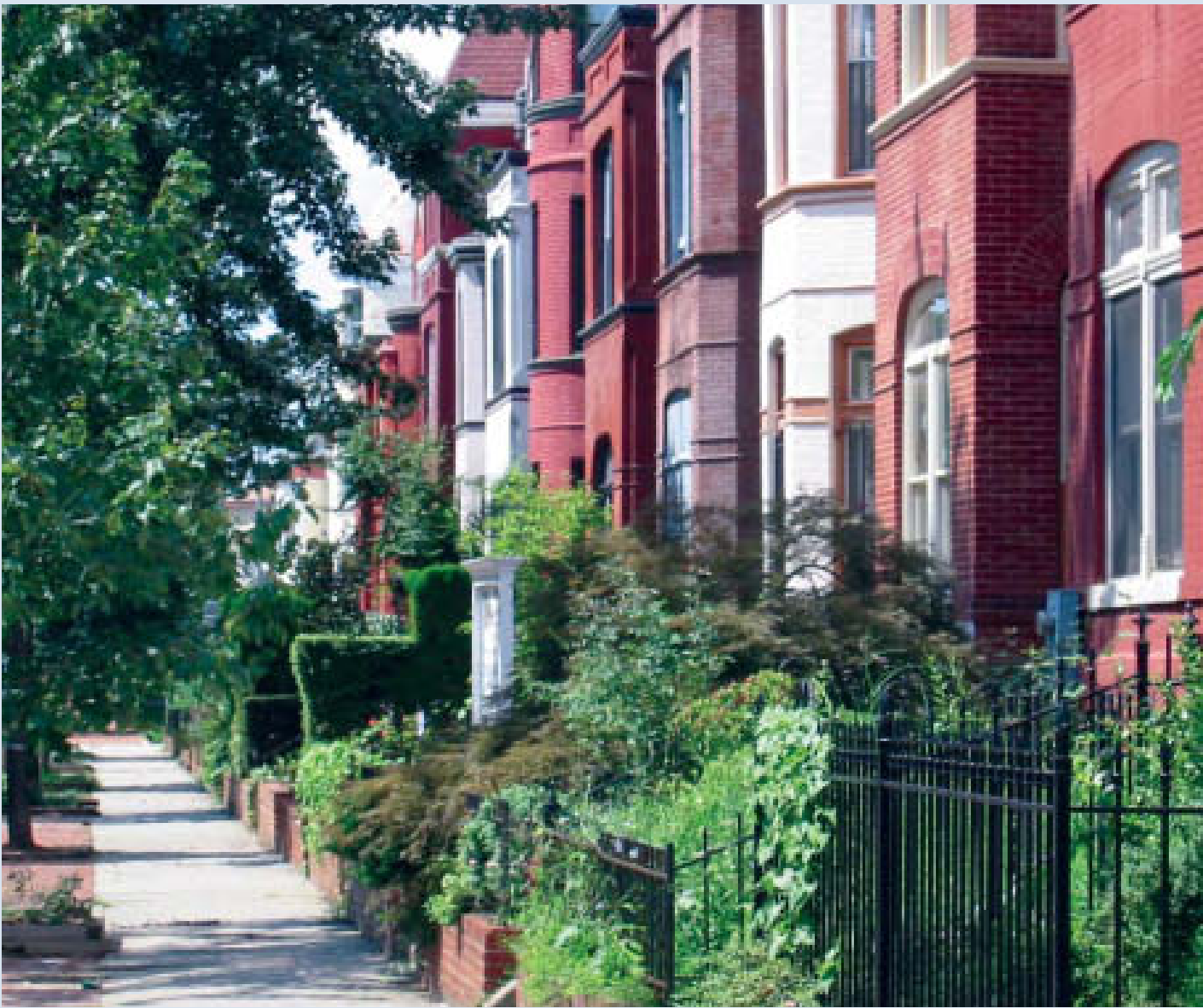
## IN OUR CITY TOMORROW...

Promoting and protecting our historic structures is vital to strengthening the identity of our neighborhoods. We can look forward to a city where:

## Our historic treasures will be protected and celebrated

**MORE HISTORIC BUILDINGS** and rowhouse neighborhoods receive permanent protection.  
**RESIDENTS** are able to renovate and cherish their historic homes.

**THE CHARACTER OF HISTORIC MAIN STREETS** is restored through the sensitive renovation and updating of commercial properties.  
**CHILDREN AND ADULTS** across DC discover the exciting history and culture within their neighborhoods.



## GETTING THERE will require policies that:

**EXPAND** existing historic districts and create new ones. Homes in these areas will need to comply with laws that ensure construction and rehabilitation are in keeping with the historic character of the area.

**PROMOTE** more public education about our city's heritage and the importance of preservation—and public awareness about historic preservation programs and good renovation practices.

**PROVIDE** tax credits and other financial incentives for homeowners and business owners in historic districts. This will help offset costs for restoring or rehabilitating historic buildings.

**CREATE** more incentives to enable low income renters and homeowners to remain in historic neighborhoods, thereby preserving their mixed income character.

**SUPPORT** small businesses in historic commercial corridors and capitalize on existing businesses to promote corridor revitalization.

# Creating Housing Choices

## IN OUR CITY TODAY...

### Most neighborhoods do not provide adequate housing choices

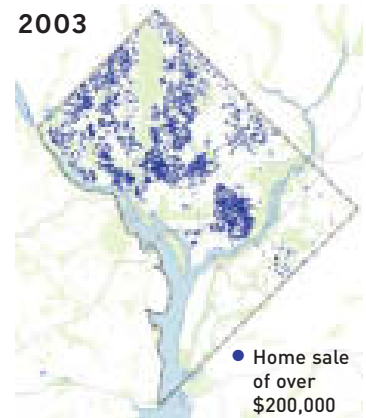
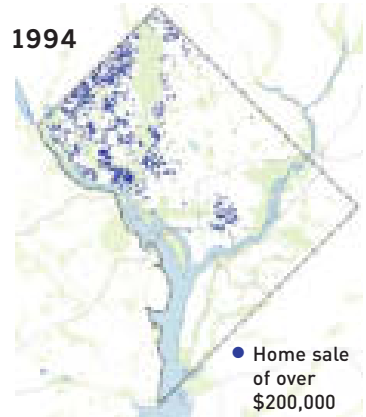
We choose a neighborhood to live in for many reasons, such as proximity to family or work, school quality, and cost. For a growing number of DC residents, housing cost has become the single factor that defines where they live. In fact, the high cost of housing is one reason why our city is so divided today.

- In many neighborhoods west of the Anacostia River, rising housing costs have resulted in fewer choices for residents. Some neighborhoods that were affordable just 10 years ago are now out of reach for many households. Other neighborhoods have never been affordable to most DC residents. For example, there is almost no subsidized housing west of Rock Creek Park.

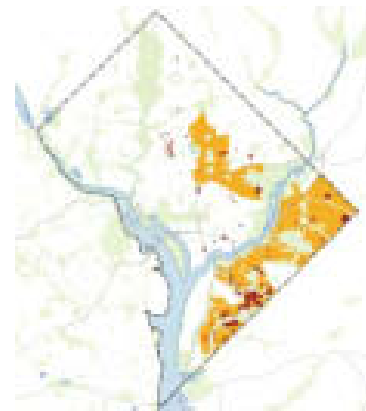
- In many neighborhoods east of the Anacostia River—and in other parts of Northeast and Southeast DC—there are high concentrations of government-subsidized housing and market rate housing prices that are lower than the city average. Although east of the river neighborhoods have just 22 percent of the city's housing units, they contain 47 percent of the city's subsidized housing. In 2002, the median sales price of a single family home east of the river was \$97,700 compared with \$210,000 in the city as a whole.

- Washington's housing divide is a regional issue that extends well beyond the city limits. The western parts of the District share some of the same issues that affect Montgomery and Fairfax Counties. The eastern sections of the District and the nearby suburbs in Prince Georges County face similar housing issues. Rising housing prices on both sides of the income divide are driving middle class families further away from the city, to new housing developments as far away as Pennsylvania.

Because the type and price of housing being built is a function of the market, government can only do so much to create more options for our residents. But more can be done to add quality affordable housing in the west and encourage more market rate homes in the east. More can be done to increase the choices available to DC renters and owners.



Between 1994 and 2003, the number of homes selling for over \$200,000 skyrocketed. Average home prices increased by 75 percent in constant dollars, topping \$350,000 in 2003.



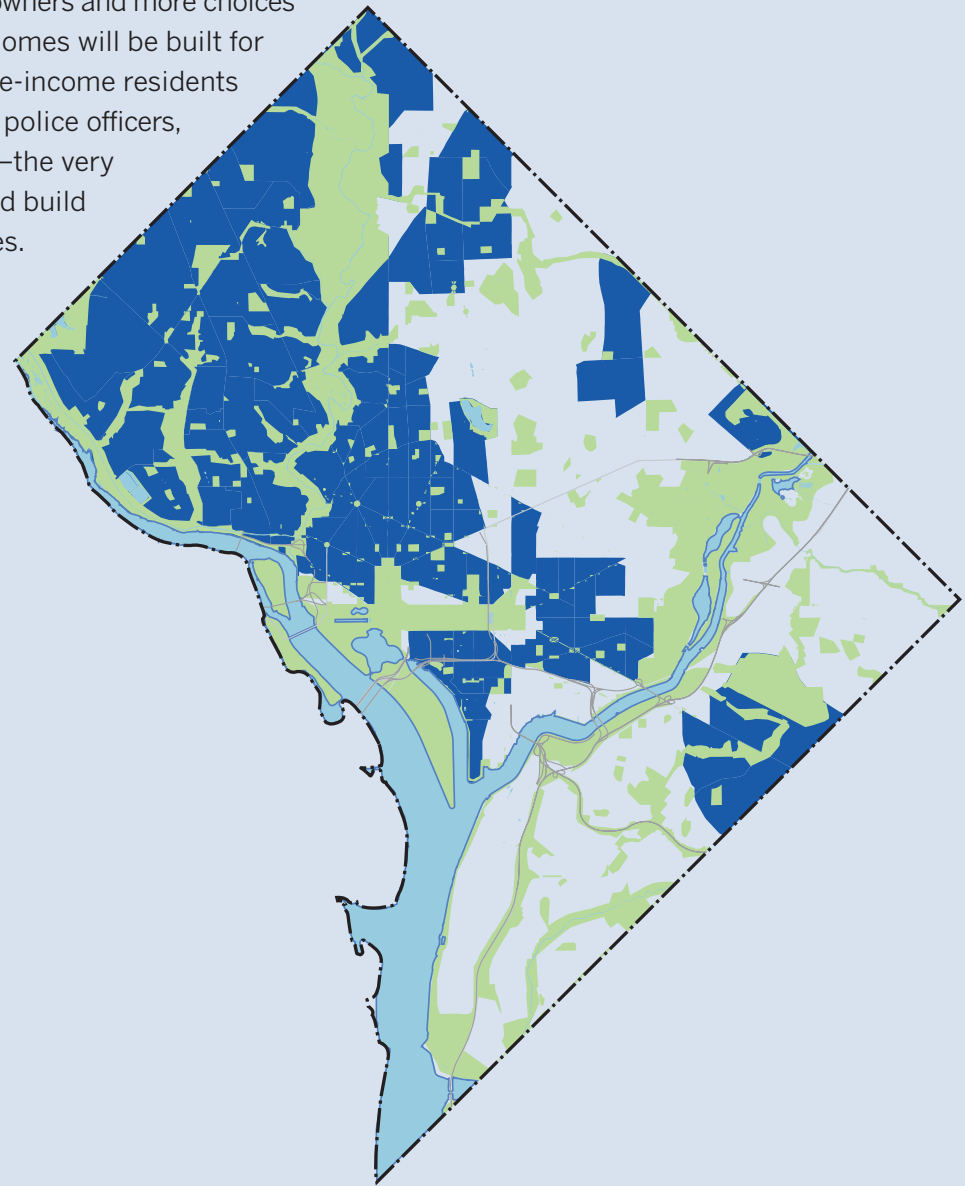
**Concentrations of lower cost housing**  
■ Subsidized housing  
■ Areas where the median home price is less than 75 percent of the citywide average

## IN OUR CITY TOMORROW...

### Neighborhoods across the city will provide a wider range of housing types and prices

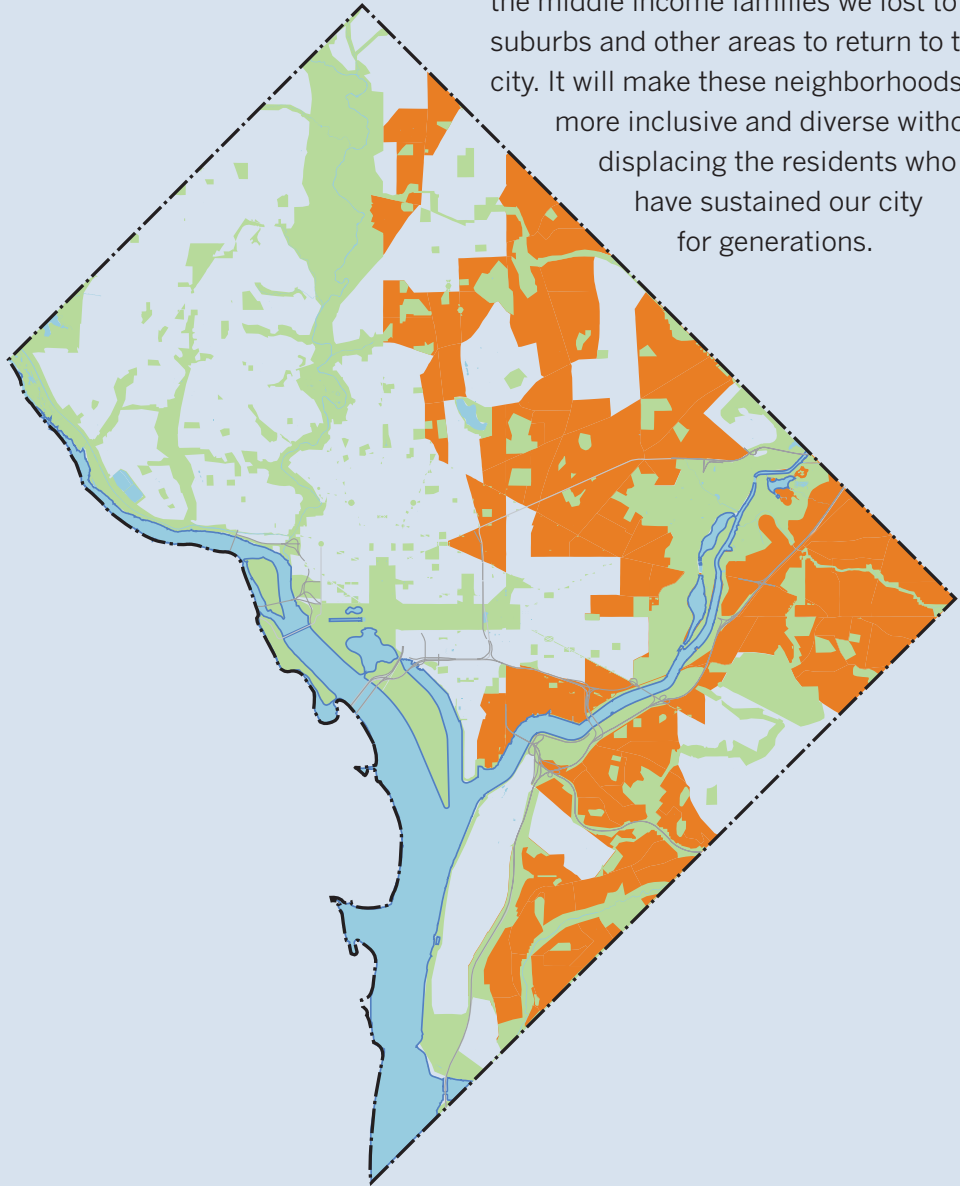
#### MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Middle class and working families will have more housing options in areas like Northwest and Capitol Hill. There will be more choices for owners and more choices for renters. New homes will be built for low- and moderate-income residents such as teachers, police officers, and tradespeople—the very people who helped build these communities.



#### MORE MARKET-RATE HOUSING

New market rate housing in these areas will include units that seniors and renters can afford. New housing will encourage the middle income families we lost to the suburbs and other areas to return to the city. It will make these neighborhoods more inclusive and diverse without displacing the residents who have sustained our city for generations.



### GETTING THERE will require policies that:

**FULLY FUND** the Housing Production Trust Fund and leverage local housing dollars to develop more low income and special needs housing.

**ENACT** zoning laws that result in new affordable housing units across the city. Our policies should ensure that all residents accept a fair share of affordable units in their neighborhoods.

**CONSERVE** today's affordable housing, especially in projects with expiring federal subsidies.

**CREATE** development incentives to encourage mixed-income housing in neighborhoods with weak housing demand.

**EXPLORE** tax rules that help seniors and lower income households avoid financial hardships as home prices in their neighborhoods rise.

**ENSURE** that our affordability goals do not compromise quality design and construction standards, so that new housing endures as well as our historic housing stock.

**PROTECT** renters and create new affordable rental housing at the same time we promote home ownership.



# Creating Housing Choices

## IN OUR CITY TODAY... Not all neighborhoods support our special needs populations

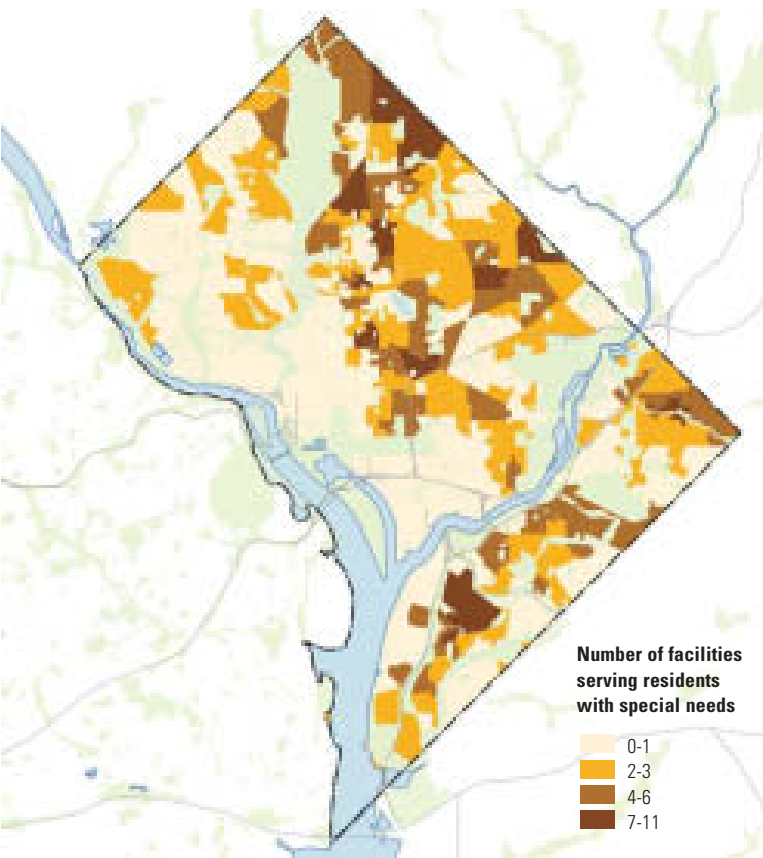
A plan for inclusive neighborhoods cannot ignore our homeless, troubled youth, elderly, foster children, ex-offenders, and others who need special help.

Of our 572,000 residents:

- More than 41,000 (7 percent) have physical disabilities.
- More than 25,000 (4 percent) have mental disabilities.

In addition:

- As many as one in 33 DC residents was homeless or resided in a Continuum of Care facility such as a homeless shelter in 2003.
- About 2,000 to 2,500 ex-offenders return to the city each year.



Some neighborhoods have as many as 11 facilities for special needs residents; others have none.

We must do our fair share to provide homes for these residents in all neighborhoods. This map shows that these homes are not spread evenly across the city but are concentrated in a few neighborhoods. Concentrations of these homes can become a heavy burden for any neighborhood.

## IN OUR CITY TOMORROW...

Our entire city will help accommodate residents with special needs as:

**SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING IS MORE EVENLY DISTRIBUTED ACROSS THE CITY.** This means that neighborhoods with few or no facilities today will house more special needs residents in the future.

**SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING RESPECTS NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER.** Group homes and other forms of special needs housing will be designed in a way that fits with the unique physical character of each DC neighborhood. Standards and policies for community-based residential facilities will be tailored to reflect the populations they serve.

## Special needs housing will be more equitably distributed across the city



**Q: Which of these homes serves residents with special needs?**

**A: All of them.**

**GETTING THERE  
will require  
policies that:**

**ESTABLISH** a process for locating special needs housing more equitably so that all neighborhoods accept their fair share.

**INCORPORATE** neighborhood concerns, such as parking, density, and design compatibility in development standards for special needs housing.

**PROMOTE** closer partnerships with non-profits and other organizations representing special needs residents.

**REQUIRE** extensive community involvement in siting special needs housing to better address neighborhood concerns.

**MONITOR** the management of special needs housing to lessen adverse neighborhood impacts.

# Guiding Growth

## IN OUR CITY TODAY...

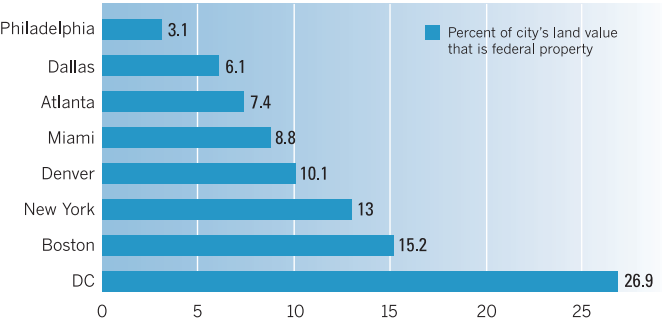
### We need to retain existing residents while bringing new residents to DC

After 50 years of population decline, our city is growing again. This is good news for all of us.

Population decline—from 800,000 residents in 1950 to about 570,000 residents in 2000—was painful to the city on many levels. The loss of almost one-third of our population left us with abandoned homes, shuttered businesses, closed public schools, and a reduced tax base.

Increasing the population means attracting the families we lost to Maryland and Virginia during the last 50 years, as well as residents from other areas. Adding 100,000 residents—a long-range target set by Mayor Williams—will help restore many of our once-vibrant neighborhoods. But growth strategies must be carried out in concert with efforts to retain our existing residents, including those with lower incomes, if we are to have the mixed income communities that sustain a healthy city. Adding residents must be about diversity, not displacement.

#### NON-TAXABLE FEDERAL LAND IN MAJOR CITIES



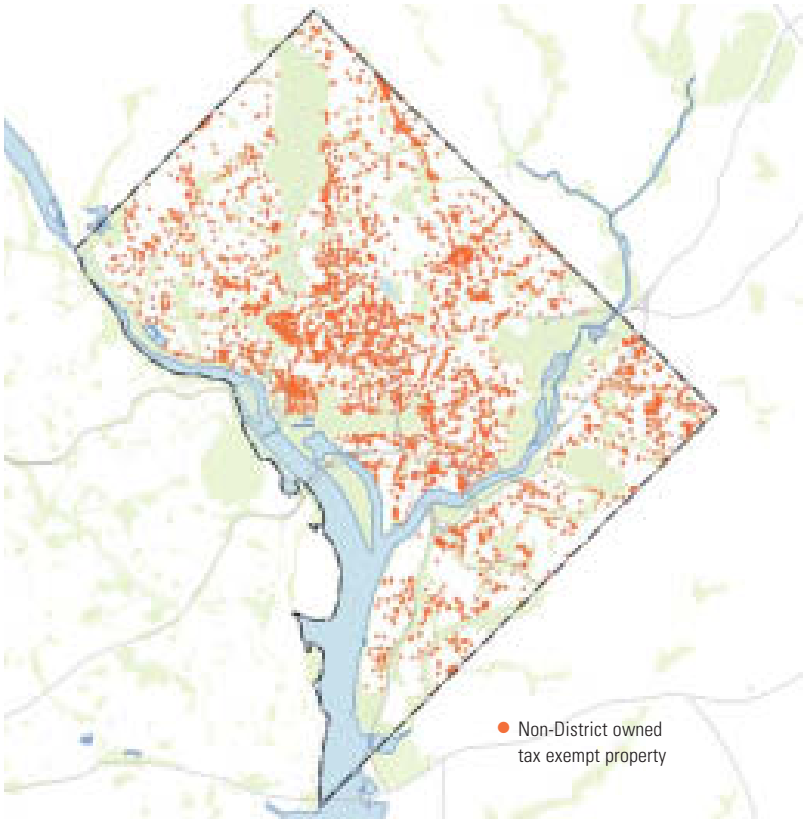
Attracting new residents means there will be enough people to support and sustain new neighborhood shops and services.

More people will also generate additional tax revenue for our city.

This is particularly important because:

- DC collects no local property taxes on land owned by the federal government. This is also the case for embassies, international organizations, and many institutions and non-profits. These exemptions cost the city about \$550 million a year.
- Over two-thirds of the income earned in our city is earned by suburban residents and not subject to DC income taxes. That's another \$1.4 billion a year we can't collect.
- The District provides public services normally offered by a state government. These services, such as higher education and health coverage, are provided without state funds.

Retaining and growing our population will help keep taxes down for current residents. It will also help pay for city services, care for our most vulnerable residents, and fund improvements we can all enjoy, like new libraries, parks, and schools.



Each dot represents a non-District owned tax-exempt property. Tax-exempt land makes up more than 53 percent of the District's area.



These young DC residents are actively involved in Latino youth activities.

### ...and we need to provide room for our fastest-growing populations

DC's senior citizen and immigrant populations are growing faster than other groups. In fact:

- The number of residents over age 65 (now about 70,000) is expected to reach 92,000 by 2025—growing at twice the rate of the general population.
- During the 1990s the number of Asian and Latino residents increased by more than 16,000. At the same time, the number of white and African-American residents declined by more than 60,000. In the past, most immigrants to the Washington region settled in the suburbs rather than in the city. This may change in the 21st century, making some DC neighborhoods more diverse in the future than they are today.

We must provide housing options and services for these growing populations as well as the programs they need to prevent financial hardship.

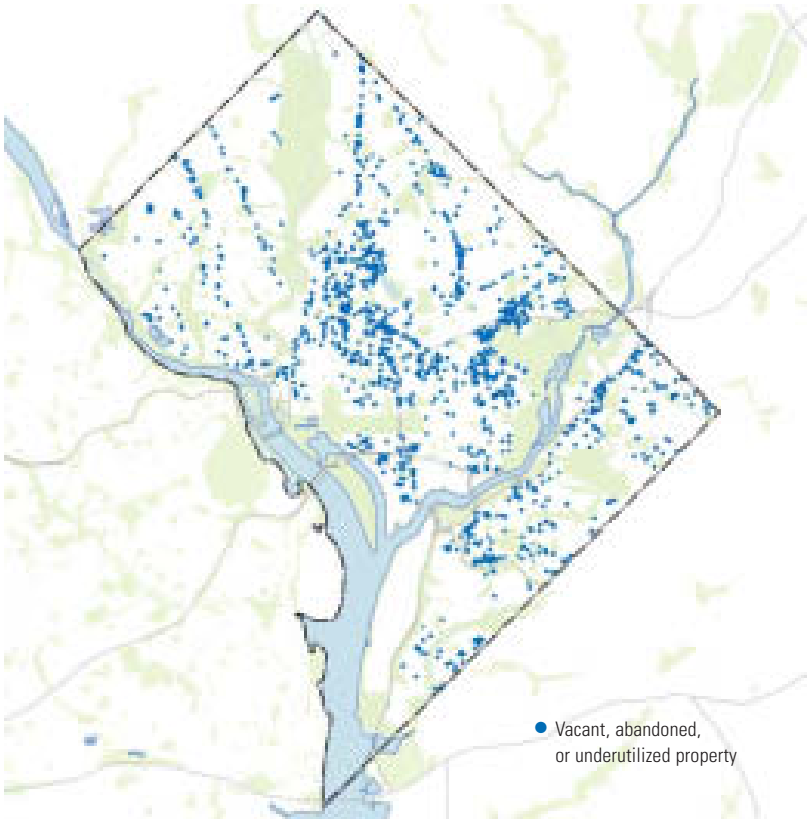
While some segments of our city's population are naturally growing, there are other groups we need to work harder to attract. This is particularly true of middle-class families, who left the city in large numbers after 1950. In fact, the goal of adding 100,000 residents stemmed from research by the Brookings Institution on the future fiscal and social health of the city. Brookings found that growth was essential for DC, and recommended that half of the 100,000 new residents be middle-income families. This would create richer civic life, help our schools and local merchants, boost our institutions, and ease the growing economic divide in the city.

### Although much of our city is fully developed, we still have room to grow

When we talk about adding 100,000 residents, a common question asked is where will they all live? Despite the fact that DC is landlocked, we actually have plenty of room to grow. Each blue dot on the map below represents a piece of land that has the potential for additional development under current zoning. The data tells us that we have the potential for more than 30,000 housing units on these sites. That translates to 60,000 to 80,000 residents. Another 30,000 to 40,000 residents can be accommodated on large sites (see next page).

The reality is that our city is growing already. In fact, the US Census reports that we've added nearly 5,100 privately owned housing units in the past four years alone—more than twice the number we added during the entire decade of the 1990s.

Because we care about preserving our neighborhoods, we need to be very careful about how we grow. Growth must be directed to the parts of the city that are best equipped to handle it. This will mean increasing densities in some areas. It will also mean taking a close look at the impacts of growth on infrastructure, services, city finances, and the environment.



Each dot on this map indicates a vacant lot, an abandoned building, or a property that is developed well below its full potential. Together, these properties could accommodate 30,000 new housing units.



# Guiding Growth

## IN OUR CITY TOMORROW...

### We will create new places to live, work, and play...

By strategically focusing future growth, we can accommodate new residents without displacing existing residents. This means:

**GROWING AROUND KEY TRANSIT STOPS.** These areas will provide new housing and jobs that will rely on the Metro, reducing traffic impacts to our streets. Our transit stops can become vital centers with the shops and services that many of our neighborhoods have been missing for years.



#### Key transit stops

- |                            |                      |                     |                      |
|----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Takoma                  | 6. Columbia Heights  | 12. New York Avenue | 18. Deanwood         |
| 2. Fort Totten             | 7. U Street/Cardozo  | 13. Waterfront      | 19. Benning Road     |
| 3. Friendship Heights      | 8. Shaw/Howard Univ. | 14. Navy Yard       | 20. Capitol Heights  |
| 4. Tenleytown/AU           | 9. Mt. Vernon Square | 15. Potomac Avenue  | 21. Anacostia        |
| 5. Georgia Avenue/Petworth | 10. Brookland/CUA    | 16. Stadium Armory  | 22. Congress Heights |
|                            | 11. Rhode Island Ave | 17. Minnesota Ave   | 23. Southern Ave     |

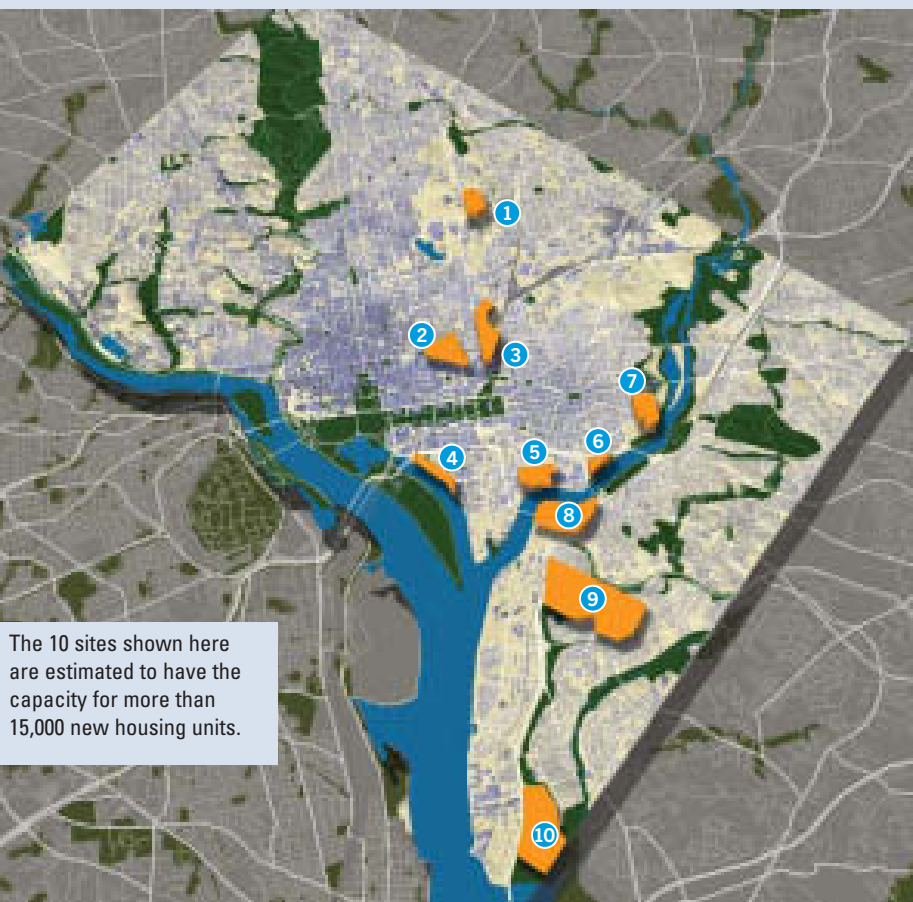
**GROWING ALONG BOULEVARDS.** Georgia Avenue, H Street, Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue and others will become lively tree-lined boulevards from end to end. Each will have a mix of housing, retail, and other uses to make these boulevards the gateways to our neighborhoods.



#### Boulevards

- |                    |                     |                                |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Wisconsin Ave   | 5. Rhode Island Ave | 9. Pennsylvania Ave SE         |
| 2. Connecticut Ave | 6. New York Ave     | 10. Minnesota Ave              |
| 3. 16th St NW      | 7. Benning Rd       | 11. Martin Luther King Jr. Ave |
| 4. Georgia Ave     | 8. Kenilworth Ave   | 12. South Capitol St           |

**GROWING IN NEW NEIGHBORHOODS.** More than 750 acres of vacant or underdeveloped land owned by the Federal and District governments can be transformed into mixed income neighborhoods. With access to open spaces and parks, these neighborhoods will allow more families than ever to realize the dream of owning a home.



#### New neighborhoods

- |                                 |                           |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Armed Forces Retirement Home | 6. M Street Southeast     |
| 2. Mount Vernon Triangle        | 7. Reservation 13         |
| 3. North Capitol Area           | 8. Poplar Point           |
| 4. Southwest Waterfront         | 9. St Elizabeths Hospital |
| 5. Southeast Federal Center     | 10. DC Village            |

### ...and transform abandoned buildings into attractive homes

By reusing abandoned buildings, we will eliminate eyesores from our neighborhoods and provide new housing options for households of different incomes. This will not only create new places to live, it will help stabilize our neighborhoods and promote economic growth.

#### BEFORE



#### AFTER



Between 1999 and 2002, the number of abandoned buildings in our city was reduced from 4,000 to 2,300. About 98 percent of these buildings were privately owned.

### GETTING THERE will require policies that:

**ALLOW** higher density housing and mixed use development. Our policies must begin to treat higher densities as an asset and not something to be reluctantly accepted.

**DIRECT** growth incentives to areas of weak demand rather than to areas where the real estate market is already strong.

**MAKE** investing public funds near transit stations a priority. Public investments in housing, street improvements, and public facilities should be focused in these areas before others.

**IMPROVE** bus service, pedestrian, and bicycle access to Metro stations.

**PURSUE** the transfer of key sites from Federal to District ownership.

**PARTNER** with institutions to promote the development of surplus land with housing, parks, and other uses.

**REQUIRE** a large amount of housing—including affordable units—when any major site is redeveloped.

**WORK** with nearby communities to determine how reuse of development sites can benefit the entire neighborhood.

**PROMOTE** building codes that make reuse and updates easier.

**SUPPORT** the use of public funds to acquire blighted properties.

**CREATE** tax incentives that encourage the reuse of abandoned buildings.

**STRENGTHEN** code enforcement and tax policies that discourage continued neglect by private property owners.

# Improving Environmental Health

## IN OUR CITY TODAY...

### The quality of our natural environment is in jeopardy

DC continues to be known as one of the nation's "green cities." This is in part because almost 20 percent of the city's land area—7,500 acres—is permanent open space. However, many of our natural resources have been compromised by overuse or neglect.

- While the Potomac and Anacostia rivers are cleaner than they used to be, they are still polluted. More than 2 billion gallons of raw sewage are released into the Anacostia River every year. Rainwater also picks up pollutants as it runs off buildings and streets into city storm drains and pipes, and eventually into the river. A much larger contributor to pollution is runoff from upstream in Maryland.
- Our air regularly fails to meet ozone standards. In June 2004, the Washington region will be designated a moderate non-attainment area for the 8-hour ozone standard by the EPA. In the past three years our region has violated this standard on an average of 23 days a year. On these days, the amount of pollution in the air may pose a risk to children, senior citizens, and those with breathing ailments.
- Tree cover in DC declined 64 percent between 1973 and 1997. Trees help stabilize the soil and keep the air clean by absorbing harmful pollutants. They also help keep rivers clean by soaking up rainwater that would otherwise flood our streets and pollute our waterways.

#### TREE COVER IN 1973...



#### ...AND IN 1997



These satellite images show the dramatic reduction in tree coverage in our city between 1973 and 1997.

## IN OUR CITY TOMORROW...

We will restore our city's natural resources and create a healthier environment in all of our neighborhoods. If we act now, we will have a city where:

### We will have a greener, healthier city

**OUR RIVERS WILL BE HEALTHY AND CLEAN.** Children will safely swim and fish and the Anacostia and Potomac rivers will become places where people from across the city come to enjoy outdoor activities.

**TREES AND PARKS WILL BE RESTORED.** Trees will strengthen the identity of neighborhoods, boulevards, and residential streets while providing shade and removing pollutants from our air.

**BUILDING CONSTRUCTION WILL BE LESS DESTRUCTIVE TO OUR ENVIRONMENT.** There will be more and more "green" buildings, with environmentally-friendly design features like rooftop gardens and energy-efficient construction. Eco-friendly design will be practiced across the city, promoting the use of recycled materials and conserving natural resources.



### GETTING THERE will require policies that:

**PROMOTE** clean water initiatives, such as the Combined Sewer Overflow Control Plan, restoration of the Anacostia River and nearby wetlands, and improvements to the Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Plant. These initiatives will have high costs and will require setting priorities.

**ADDRESS** the siting of new waste management and trash transfer facilities.

**SUPPORT** tree planting and urban forestry programs on a massive scale. To succeed, these efforts will require partnerships with community groups and nonprofits.

**PROMOTE** environmental education in our schools.

**MAINTAIN** safe, clean neighborhoods.

**ENCOURAGE** water and energy conservation and recycling programs. Residents will need to learn to consume less and recycle more.

**CREATE** incentives for LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)-certified construction and sustainable design techniques.





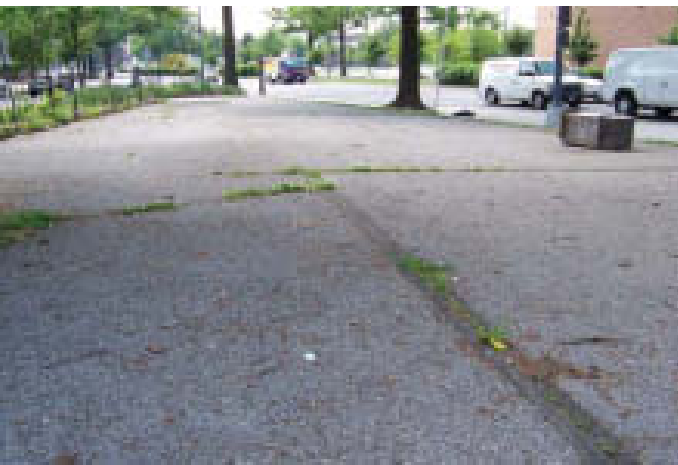
# Improving Environmental Health

## IN OUR CITY TODAY...

**Some neighborhoods have parks and open space in poor condition—or no parks and open space at all**

**Parks and open space provide more than just a place to play. They strengthen neighborhood identity, increase property values, and help sustain our environment.**

DC has one of the finest park systems in the country, including 900 acres of city parks and more than 6,700 acres of national parkland—all of it open to the public. We have more parkland per person (13 acres per 1,000 residents) than Baltimore, Boston, Philadelphia, or New York.



Too many of our parks are forgotten lands.



Northeast DC residents have little access to parkland.

## IN OUR CITY TOMORROW...

**Improving our city's parks and open spaces will mean that:**

**ALL OF OUR PARKS WILL BE SAFE, WELL-MAINTAINED PLACES.** Our city's parks will be beautifully and sensitively designed, preserving their open character. They will welcome people of all ages and become a source of pride for all of our neighborhoods. Residents will help care for their parks and will pitch in through community-based clean-ups.

**RESIDENTS WILL HAVE ACCESS TO A WIDE RANGE OF RECREATIONAL EXPERIENCES.** Whether it's hiking on a riverfront trail, taking the kids to a playground, or enjoying a softball or basketball game, residents will use our parks for a variety of leisure activities.

**NEIGHBORHOODS THAT ONCE HAD NO OPEN SPACE WILL HAVE PLACES TO PLAY AND RELAX.** Land owned by the Federal and DC governments—such as the Armed Forces Retirement Home and the McMillan Reservoir Sand Filtration Site—will be opened to the public, allowing residents to enjoy these spaces.

**GETTING THERE will require policies that:**

## All neighborhoods will have safe, clean, accessible parks



Through creative partnerships, we can open up our government-held lands and make them more accessible to the neighborhoods around them.

### Government-held lands

1. Armed Forces Retirement Home
2. McMillan Reservoir Sand Filtration Site
3. National Arboretum
4. St. Elizabeth's Campus

**REQUIRE** open space set-asides within new developments. This means that future developments might be taller and denser, so that more room is left over for small parks and plazas.

**PROMOTE** partnerships with the National Park Service and other institutions to improve open space access and, in some cases, transfer land to DC. Transferring land means that additional District funds and staff will be needed to maintain this property.

**EXPLORE** joint use agreements with DC Public Schools to improve access to school open space. Additional funds will be needed to improve the safety and accessibility of these spaces.

**SUPPORT** the improvement of public properties, such as triangle parks along our major avenues. This will also take additional resources to properly implement.



### Making it Work at Watts Branch Park

Watts Branch is the longest city park and creek in Washington. The stream and trail run through the Far Northeast DC neighborhoods of Capitol Heights, Burrville, Lincoln Heights, Deanwood, and Eastland Gardens. Generations of people fished and swam in the creek during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. By the late 1900s, the creek was neglected and forgotten by most DC residents. Recent efforts by a committed group of Northeast DC residents, led by Washington Parks and People and assisted by the DC Department of Parks and Recreation, are turning Watts Branch Park around. Since 2001, people of all ages have volunteered to work in the park, clearing overgrown vegetation and improving visibility. Plans for trail and bridge improvements are in the works. A permanent community partnership involving more than 15,000 volunteers from the community and across the District has been formed to restore the park and make it come alive again.

**PROMOTE** the development of new trails along the Anacostia River, Watts Branch, Oxon Run, and elsewhere.

**CREATE** new revenue sources for fixing and maintaining existing parks.

**ENCOURAGE** citizens and community groups to adopt parks, keeping them clean and well maintained.



# Targeting Investment

## IN OUR CITY TODAY...

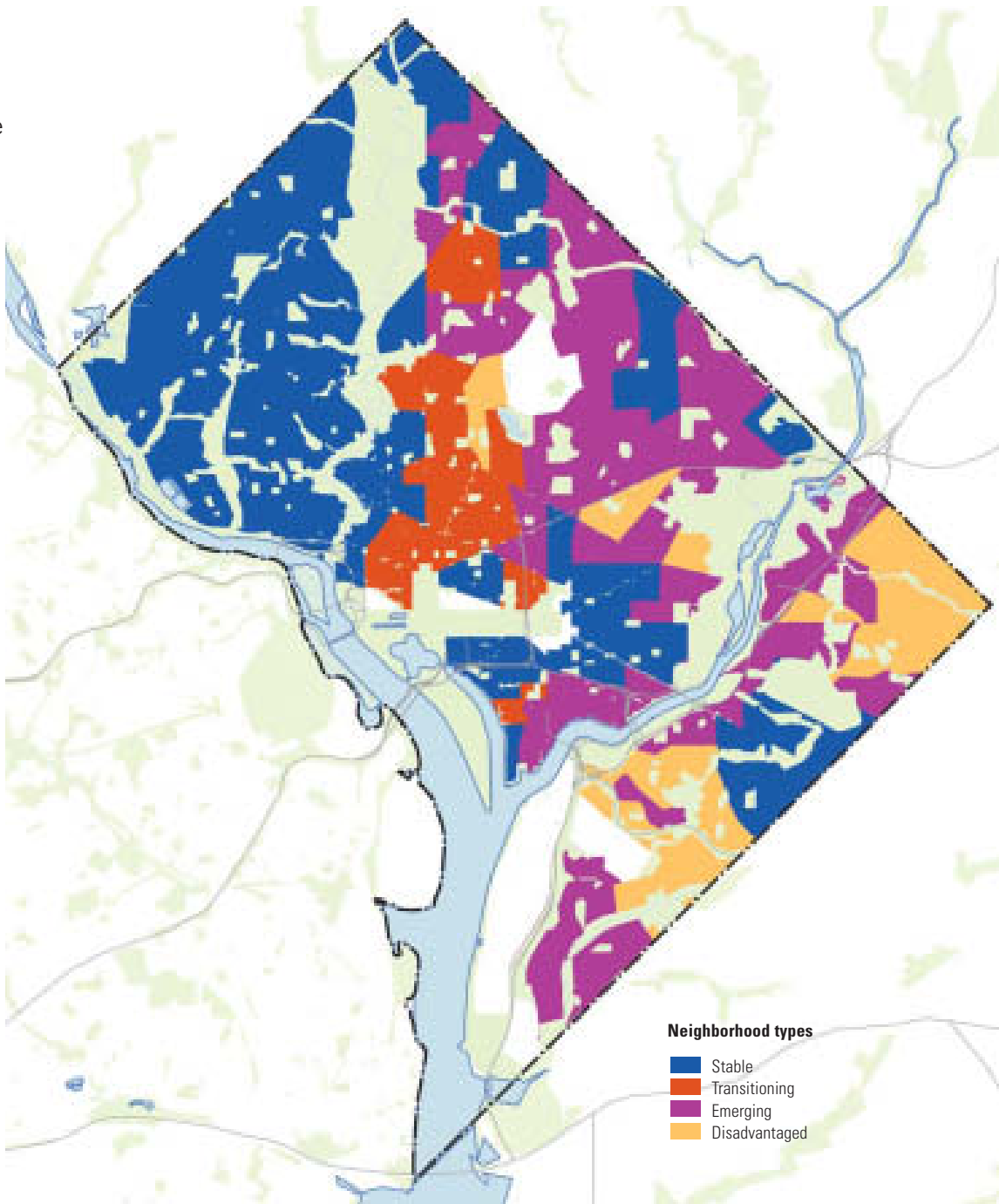
### Our neighborhoods have different needs and resources

Strategies for growing more inclusively must be tailored to reflect the different needs and conditions in our neighborhoods. In some areas, our challenge is to manage a booming real estate market. In other areas, our challenge is to generate market interest.

To better understand and respond to neighborhood needs, the DC Office of Planning evaluated data and trends for every neighborhood in the city. The analysis looked at infrastructure conditions, the quality of housing and retail amenities, the local real estate market, crime rates, school performance, and community facilities such as parks. The analysis also considered the level of civic involvement in each neighborhood.

Based on this analysis, neighborhoods were characterized in four ways:

- Stable, with healthy real estate markets, above average home values, and positive social and economic indicators.
- Transitioning, with rapid development, rising property values, and the potential for displacement.
- Emerging, with moderately positive social and economic indicators but underperforming compared to the stable neighborhoods.
- Disadvantaged, with little private investment and low social and economic indicators.



### Our revitalization strategies must reflect these differences

Recognizing the city's limited resources, many neighborhood revitalization strategies have focused on areas where visible and significant outcomes can be achieved within the next three to five years. These tend to be emerging and transitional neighborhoods that show some combination of the following qualities:

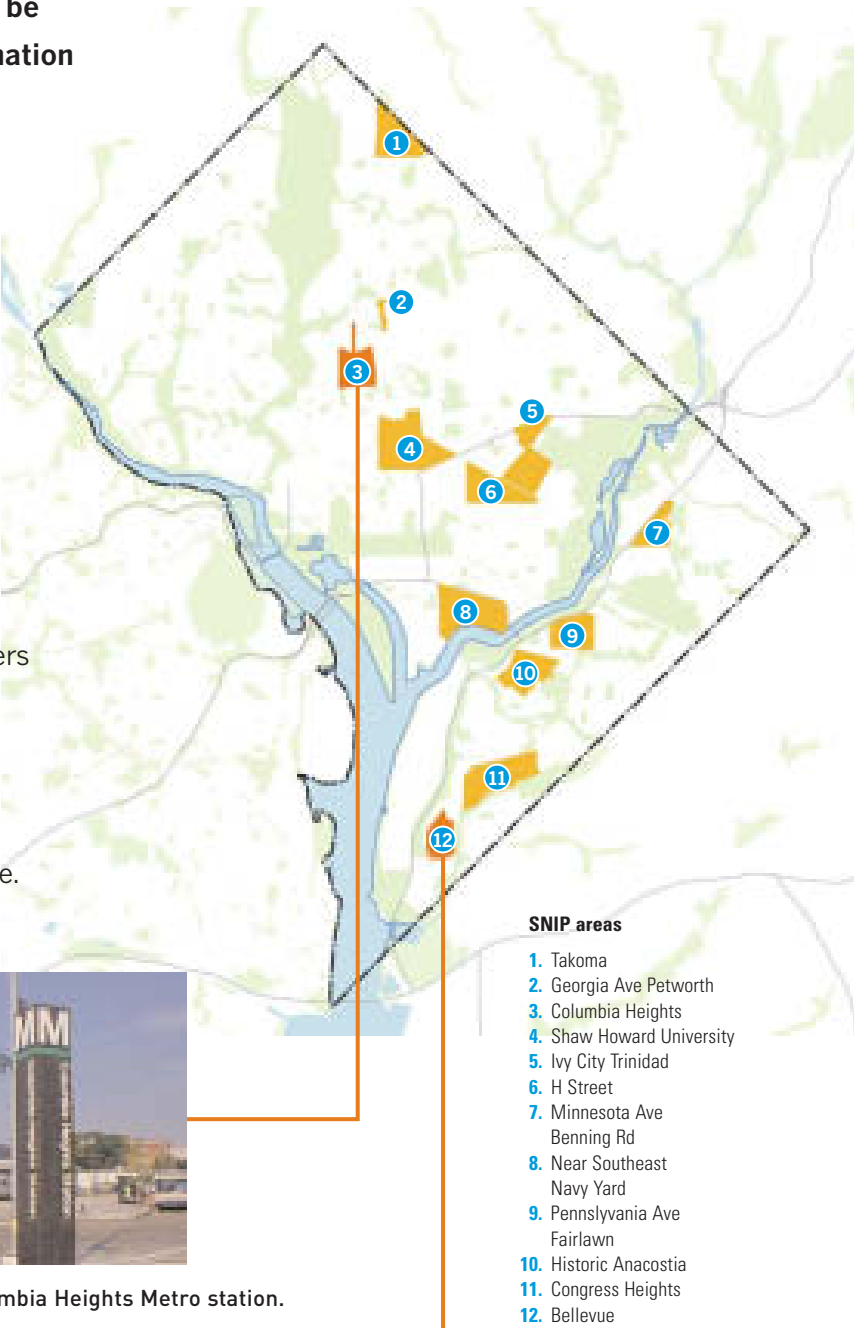
- Strong anchor institutions such as colleges or hospitals.
- Potential private or philanthropic partners.
- Good access to Metro and major arterial streets.
- Areas of land owned by the District or other public entities.
- Housing and commercial development opportunities.

Based on these qualities, 12 Strategic Neighborhood Investment Program or “SNIP” areas have been identified (see map). Investment of public and private dollars is being coordinated within each of these areas. Examples of public investments include reclaiming blighted properties, upgrading schools and services, improving streets, redeveloping retail and civic centers, and working closely with developers to encourage new development. New SNIP areas will be identified after the 12 original areas show visible improvements.

An example of the program's impacts on two DC neighborhoods is laid out on the following pages. For many years, these neighborhoods—Columbia Heights and Bellevue—have lagged behind the city as a whole.

**IN COLUMBIA HEIGHTS**, the 2000 Census reported that 33 percent of the residents lived in poverty, compared to 20 percent citywide. Although the median value of a home (\$175,300) was higher than the citywide average (\$157,200), only 14 percent of the households were homeowners.

**IN BELLEVUE**, the 2000 Census reported that 20 percent of the residents lived in poverty, matching the citywide statistic. However, the median value of a home (\$108,400) was 65 percent of the citywide average. About 35 percent of the households were homeowners, compared to 40 percent citywide.



Vacant land adjacent to the Columbia Heights Metro station.



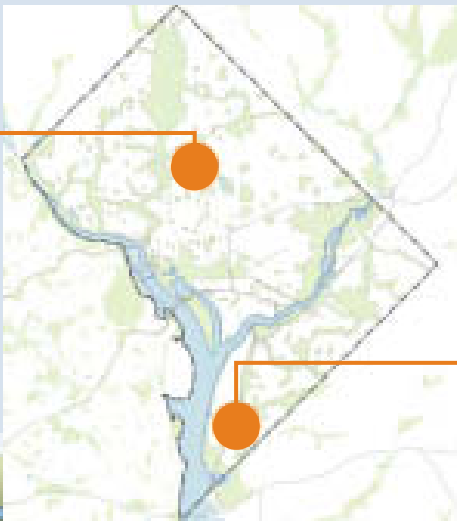
Vacant housing in the Bellevue neighborhood.

# A Vision Becomes a Reality

Emerging and transitioning neighborhoods will become stable, vibrant communities

## In Columbia Heights

The 1968 riots following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. devastated Columbia Heights. More than half of the neighborhood’s businesses were burned or looted and one out of every five houses was badly damaged. Today, the neighborhood is in the midst of a development boom, spurred in part by the opening of the Metrorail Green Line in 1999.



### STRENGTHENING NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY

- 1. Adding a new Community Center that will provide day care, a gymnasium, and classrooms. Department of Parks and Recreation staff will also be located here.
- 2. Creating new public spaces, including a new civic plaza, landscaping, street and curb improvements, and unique paving.
- 3. Rehabilitating the historic Tivoli Theater, which was closed in the 1970s. The exterior will be preserved and the interior will include a theater, a sit-down restaurant, stores, offices, and condos.
- 4. Rebuilding Bell Lincoln High School, including not only new classrooms, but also a multi-media center and a daycare and recreation center that will be open to the public.
- 5. Constructing a \$3.8 million state-of-the-art facility for the Dance Institute of Washington.

### CREATING MORE HOUSING CHOICES

- 6. Building 235 new housing units next to the Metro stop. 59 of these units will be affordable for people with low and moderate incomes. Retail stores will be on the ground floor.
- 7. Building three housing projects totaling 116 new housing units, including at least 40 affordable units for people with low and moderate incomes. Retail stores and a day care center will also be added.
- 8. Building 222 units of new housing, which will include 75 affordable rental units for senior citizens.
- 9. Building 40 new townhouses, with 10 to be priced as affordable units for people with low and moderate incomes.

### GUIDING GROWTH

- 10. Creating an extended public plaza for the community at the Columbia Heights Metro Station.

- 11. Constructing a housing complex with 117 housing units and retail stores on the ground floor adjacent to this plaza.
- 12. Adding a new 53,000 square foot Giant Food supermarket.
- 13. Developing a large retail center featuring a Target store and other national retailers.

### IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

- 14. Completing a new Girard Street playground by mid-2005. Once an area of intense crime, this playground will have new landscaping, lighting, and play equipment for children of varying ages.
- 15. Adding two tennis courts, a softball diamond, and a soccer field.
- 16. Planting trees and landscaping to provide shade and restore lost vegetation.

## In Bellevue

Between 1980 and 2000, Bellevue lost more than 20 percent of its residents. Today, the Bellevue neighborhood in Southeast Washington already is applying many of the strategies outlined in this chapter to create a successful neighborhood.



### STRENGTHENING NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY

- 1. Replacing Patterson Elementary with a new \$15 million school.
- 2. Restoring the vacant Atlantic Theater as commercial space.
- 3. Exploring options to rehabilitate the neighborhood library.
- 4. Expanding workforce development opportunities, for instance, by opening the South Capitol One-Stop Career Center to help residents gain the skills needed to succeed in the DC workforce.

### CREATING MORE HOUSING CHOICES

- 5. Replacing an abandoned apartment complex on Danbury Street with 119 new townhouses.
- 6. Opening two housing counseling centers to help residents realize the dream of owning a home.
- 7. Working with property owners to acquire and rehabilitate abandoned homes throughout the neighborhood, while keeping them affordable to low and moderate income families.

### GUIDING GROWTH

- 8. Repaving South Capitol Street and improving streetlights—and reconstructing Danbury, Forrester, and Galveston streets and Halley Terrace.

### IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

- 9. Redesigning and extending the pedestrian/bicycle trail in Oxon Run Park. A Park Master Plan Update will start in 2004 and will identify additional improvements to the park and trail.
- 10. Removing the concrete channel in Oxon Run Park, returning the stream to its natural state and creating a sustainable habitat for plants and animals.